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Nor shall dim fancy's dreams alone
That holy presence bring;
When meet earth's myriads round the throne
Of heaven's descending King.

Where shine the spirits of the just,
From imperfection free.*
There hope, with no delusive trust,
With that lov'd saint to be.

CAPTAIN DEMPSEY, THE HERMIT OF DUBLIN.

Who that was resident in Dublin between the last forty and fifty years but remembers Captain Dempsey?—a tall, sinewy man, with high cheek bones, sunken eyes, and self-resigned aspect, and over whose chin no razor had passed for years. His beard was of a brownish hue and very bushy. He wore in general a long plaid mantle tied at the neck, and hanging loosely over his shoulders—a broad hat, with a singularly round crown; two patches of leather sewed on his knees, and large silver buckles in his shoes. His finger was adorned with several rings—not for their lustre, it was evident, but in remembrance of some dear friends; for at times he would be seen to make a sudden stand in the streets, look on them with a wild stare, then, as if collecting his scattered senses together, let the day be never so wet, drop on his knees, offer up on each ring a prayer in silence, then precipitately rise and proceed on his journey, although through a crowd of gapers and shouts of idle boys. Patrick-street was his favourite haunt, and he seemed to have a particular taste for herrings, as he was seldom ever observed to return home without a few of them under his cloak.

His habitation was a wooden hut, in one corner of a piece of waste ground, at the lower end of Townsend-street, near the old depot. The door was at the top, to which he ascended by blocks of wood nailed at the outside at regular distances. The door or window, we may call it either, overlooked the sea: there would he sit for hours together in seeming pensiveness. When his mind would be tranquil, which was often the case, he was very conversant, and so condescending to the enquiry of the curious, that he would seem gratified in satisfying the inquisitive demands of the meanest boy. But if any of his fits of insanity should visit him, he would clap the door in the face of the person to whom he was speaking, and retire to a place he had under ground, in which was a little altar, and two tin lamps constantly burning. Sometimes his door would be shut for several days, until the fit worked off him, for which the neighbours charitably watched, and as soon as he again appeared and resumed his accustomed station, would bring him such refreshments as his weak frame required. The chief point requisite in the visitor appeared to be to keep his mind and eyes from his rings; for if he once dwelt on them all discourse was over, and ten chances to one but the door of his little habitation would be so quickly dashed in the face of the visitor, as to strike him violently in the face.

I had the curiosity to ascend his Crusoe-built hut one day. I found him in one of his best humours; and to introduce myself the better, I presented him with a few red herrings and some white biscuits, which he thankfully received, viewing and smelling the former with seeming gratification. After a little roundabout discourse, I collected from him the following short sketch of his life and cause of retirement. No doubt I got it in piecemeals, through his wanderings, but I have endeavoured to link it together with as much care and probability as I could.

He mentioned that his father bound him an apprentice to his uncle, who was master and owner of seven good trading ships. His first trip was to the West Indies, where he remained for two years, trading from one island to the other. On his return he was caressed by many friends—at one merchant's house in particular. "Oh!" he said, with a heavy sigh, "I saw an angel, as it were, rising out of the sea—so lovely, so endearing, so complaisant:

I saw her eyes—I still see them following my steps over the sea-green carpet. Three weeks only did I enjoy this heaven-sent bliss. I went on another trip. My uncle took ill of the yellow fever at Jamaica, and died. He bequeathed all he possessed to me when of age, as I was then only eighteen. The mate of the vessel was his executor, under whose care he placed me. We sailed home. I no sooner stood on terra firma, than I would make to where the needle of my soul directed; but whatever lesson the mate received from my dying uncle, or whatever the mate put into his mind, I could never learn, but I would not be let go unless he was present with me. I cared not—he came—I saw my leading star—she received me with inexpressible joy. Her father hinted his intention of going to settle in Scotland, and that he would put the adorable Lydia (for that was her name) under my protection, and leave her with her aunt until himself should follow. My heart sprang, and my pulse beat high at the honour, nay the blessing, he was going to confer. I mildly bowed, and said she should be taken care of. Next day she went on board with two female servants. We made our destined port too soon. I often wished for contrary winds to drive us half seas over. On landing, Gretna was our object. Our plot was discovered by the mate. He ordered me to my cabin, and said I should not quit the vessel without his permission. I stamped—I thought I had sufficient authority to set him adrift—I was mistaken. 'You shall see who'll be master,' he said, as he took my angel by the hand, and led her off. How did I subdue my rage?

He then wrote to her father, exulting in himself how he had discovered the plot. But I had my satisfaction so far. Instead of her father thanking him, he replied, that his child knew well how to conduct herself, and was sorry he had taken such trouble. In fact, her father would be well satisfied had such taken place, as I was under age, and could not get his consent. I saw my love again. We exchanged gifts, the emblem of never-ending affection. We weighed anchor—made our destination. I there received letters stating that one of my best ships had been wrecked off Wales. I felt not the loss, as I enjoyed only the name of owner. On my return home, to darken the gloomy tale as black as pitch. I was informed that my beloved Lydia had taken shipping in her in order to meet me at my landing, and went down with the whole crew.

"I wept—I cursed every ship I had—I cursed the waves as I saw them break against the beach. I hurried away in another vessel of my own that had just cleared out of port, and bound for Bologne.

"The mate, as soon as he found me gone, drew large sums of money in my name, then taking in a general cargo, set sail for Gibraltar, where he sold ship and all. However, he had some slight spark of humanity left, for he deposited a small box, containing my uncle's will, and other papers of value in a merchant's hands. I was now come of age—I had five ships left, and a considerable sum of money due to me. I strove to shake off the melancholy that depressed my spirit too long. Proposals were made me by a wealthy merchant in Glasgow with his daughter. The young lady, no doubt, was one that might gain the affections of any man—But, oh, Lydia—I was to be married, when hearing of my mother's illness, without hope of her recovery, I hastened to visit her in her last moments, and commit her dear remains to the earth. I returned to my intended bride; but again my cup of sorrow was brimming over—she had been poisoned by some base wretch, who long expected her hand. She was in her last pangs. 'Twas only now I felt love for her strike me with the same power it did for Lydia. When she raised her languid eyes, and stretched forth her arms, as fair as alabaster, to receive and bid me a last, a long farewell. O——her sunken eyes, as they stared, can I ever forget the tender look.

"In about a month after her decease, I resolved on quitting the land of all my woes for ever. So regulating my affairs, and appointing a steady agent, I set sail for America. We had a favourable wind for several days, till on the night of the 2d of September, 1776, we were wrecked on the coast of Newfoundland. Every soul on board perished, save myself and a cabin boy. When drifted to

* "The spirits of just men made perfect."—Heb. xii. 23.

shore almost exhausted to death, and unable to crawl from the spot we gained, the boy observed a light in the window of a small house at no great distance. I despatched him with news of our sad disaster. Two men servants came to my assistance. I was brought to the house, and every refreshment given. I was now poor, aye, very poor indeed. Next morning I wrote to a merchant living about twenty miles distant for a supply of money. He attended to my demand.

"All this time I saw not the owner of the house, but was attended by a servant. So thinking it some house of public entertainment, I called for my bill.

"What, Sir!" said the servant, "would you offend the lady of the house?"

"From the debt I owe," I replied, "no money, 'tis true, would acquit me; but may I be allowed to see her, that I may return thanks for her kindness."

"You can, Sir, this afternoon," said the servant, "and she expresses much desire to see you, but not until evening;" so bowing he left me.

"I viewed my sea-beat trim, and felt that I was not fit to appear in a lady's presence. The servant I despatched for a cloth broker, and had myself new rigged in less than two hours.

"The appointed hour arrived. I was ushered by a female servant to a well-fitted apartment, and showed to a seat. In a few minutes a lady entered, dressed in black, and thickly veiled. I rose to salute her—she returned it in silence. She then made several attempts to speak, but her breathing seemed short and stifled. The boldness of a tar came on me.

"Madam, your veil so drowns your voice, that I cannot catch a word you say. Excuse me, Madam;" so stretching my hand I suddenly raised her veil, and as suddenly let it fall again. Lydia stood before me. I sprang to embrace her. She spurned at my ecstasy, and threw me back with her hand.

"Stand back, Robert!" she exclaimed; "touch not polluted lips," and she burst into tears.

"Strange amazement seized my soul—I stood motionless—I dare not approach her. At last, recovering from the first shock, I cried out, 'Tell me, tell me quickly, Lydia, the cause of this strange action. You that I thought for ever lost, and now'—"

"So I was, and so I am," she replied, "lost! lost! lost!"

"After a mutual silence, she turned her eyes, those eyes so full of tenderness, towards me, and spake thus:—

"Of course you felt the loss of your ship, and know every circumstance attending it. After it went down, myself and another female got into a small boat. We tossed about from wave to wave until near daylight, when we were picked up by a vessel outward bound. The storm continued, and she was obliged to pursue her voyage. We still expected, day after day, to meet a vessel bound homeward. We did at last—one bound for France. Into her myself and servant entered. I was treated for about five days with all marks of politeness and respect. At last he proved a monster, and I fell a victim to his brutal lust. My maid suffered the same fate by the sailors; but rather than live under this hopeless affliction, this redeemless dishonour, she flung herself overboard and perished. But I, the object of divine vengeance, still live. I am here in the brute's dwelling, which to me is a wolf's den: and now the fiery rays of revenge quicken hotter in my breast. The only buoy that sustained my soul, and preserved me from sinking in the unfathomable depths of despair, was, that ever since the wretch placed me here, he offered me no more violence; but 'tis fear, not honour, urges him to do so; and if possible, to hide the crime and save his neck. I seldom see him; and though he has placed a watch over me, he might save himself the trouble—I do not want to escape. I am happy in my mind, that all the world imagine I lie at the bottom of the deep—let them think so still."

"I could subdue my fury no longer. My blood boiled—my sinews began to brace, that I thought they'd crack.

"Where is the brute now? Where will I find him, that I may gnaw his entrails like a shark?"

"Peace, hasty man," replied my soul-torn Lydia, wip-

ing the tears away from her eyes, 'suppress your rage a moment; let the revenger learn patience from the injured.' This checked my rage. I sought an embrace. I was again denied. I implored her on my knees to quit her savage prison. She glided out of the room in the twinkling of an eye.

"In a few minutes I received a note from her, telling me that as I held dear the remembrance of what she once was, not to leave the house until her design would be accomplished; and that very evening, at the same hour, I might come into her presence.

"I now turned into my own room. Who could portray my tortured mind. I paced the floor the live long night, laying down plans of revenge, but on whom I knew not.

"Morning broke at last. I despatched my boy with a letter to my friend, from whom I had received the money, requesting him to direct the first vessel homeward bound to touch at the point and take me in, but on no account to let my name be known."

Here he suddenly cast down his eyes. I thought that he was about to end his narrative, but he as suddenly raised them again.

"Ay; my correspondent obeyed my wish. Three days after I saw a vessel nearing the shore. I saw the jolly-boat rowing to shore. Lydia saw it too. I heard her scream—I still hear her scream. I ran to her apartment. I raised her head. I gave her the first—a senseless kiss. She opened her rolling eyes, and again screamed horribly.

"He comes. The wretch—the brute now comes. Fly, Robert, and leave me."

"I will, Lydia," I cried with mad joy. So snatching a hanger that caught mine eye, I rushed forward—met the wretch—the very master of the vessel sent for me—the despoiler of all I loved on earth. He fell on his own threshold. As I stood over him with fiend-like grin, I started again. Fresh joy burst on my remaining sense, when I beheld no other than my perfidious mate—the robber of my youth—my poor uncle's trustee. Hail! hail! haw!"

After an immoderate fit of laughter he began again.

"I rushed into Lydia; but scarce had time to meet her when the crew of the jolly-boat was at my heels. I stood for some time in my own defence, until one of them who had known me interfered. However I was taken to prison. Lydia came forward with a sailor, who proved to the brutal treatment she received, and I got other evidence of his robbery. I was acquitted. Lydia! Lydia! Lydia!" he exclaimed with all the workings of despair, and was again going to break off, when, fortunately, a ship under full sail met his rolling eye, and forced the nautical man to pour out—

"Just such another," said he, pointing to her, was my Mermaid; see how she stems the tide."

"And was that the name of the ship," said I, in order to come round again to the subject, "that you first lost."

"No," he said, "but the one I first sailed in with my uncle; the one that carried all the treasure I adored on earth—my Lydia."

"And after you were acquitted, captain, did you leave Lydia behind?"

"Leave Lydia behind! No, foolish youth," he said, gathering his mouth to a sarcastic grin. I seized my hard sought prize. I offered her my hand, with full assurance that the misfortune would but make her more dear to me. But no; her soul could not be polluted, although in a frail earthly frame; she was still as pure as the morning dew.

"Nay, Robert," she replied to all my entreaties, "never shall you be pointed at. While you now sympathise, and the first impulse of your love rekindled, all is well; but as soon as the matrimonial chain would attain its full weight, perhaps—and for me to escape this trial—a trial worst of all. I shall ever love, but never give my—I have no hand to give. Oh, Robert Dempsey! if you bear the shadow of your former love, hide me, and provide for me in some lone retreat, where the insulting eye of the human race can never see me."

"As she ended I looked on her with tender surprise. Methought every feature shed the lustre of an angel."

"'Yes, yes,' I cried, and grasped her struggling in my arms; you shall possess your wish while blood flows in those veins. I shall be your protector—your lover—and no more: and yet I will live in hopes of other joys when your mind becomes more tranquil. Speak, Lydia, speak; say where you chuse for your retirement."

"She did, with tears of gratitude bursting from her soft dark eye. A vessel bound for Ireland received us both. Yonder, yonder was her chosen spot, he said, as he pointed with his finger to Clontarf. There she lived for thirteen short years. There she died, and was buried by the sea shore—the lamented stranger. For thirteen years she was the beacon of my soul. With brother's love alone I came and went. From east to west nothing was too precious or dear for her. Aye—thirteen years I implored—I adored her. At last she left the world and me a wanderer. She was interred before I could once more gaze upon her. I looked for all the gifts I bestowed, thinking she preserved them. So she did—but 'twas in heaven. Every rarity I gave her was turned to money. The poor wanted it. She did not. I heard it all. I learned enough. No directing star to guide my vessel of mortality, the binical of my reason was overturned. The squall of grief was too sudden and severe. My agents made away with my property. French privateers took more. The sea swallowed up the rest. But ah!" he said with an air of triumph, "they could not devour all without myself—my Lydia's first gift. I hold it more dear than ship's treasure, or even myself. There it is." So saying he cast his eye on his hand, while he placed his finger on the upper ring—then in succession—"my Lydia—my mother—my intended bride, Mary—and"—he made a pause. I immediately dropped from my hold. The door was shut. I saw or heard no more.

In about a month after the interview I called to see him. I saw him, but did not find him so conversant. However I picked out as much matter as he did not before explain. His wholesoul seemed absorbed in the contemplation of the one object—his early love, who he seemed to look upon as an angel of light.

He lived about two years after this, and died in 1802. His death was unknown for a whole week. 'Twas thought he was in one of his frantic fits. When his hut was opened, he was found in his place of prayer under ground.

Thus ended Captain Robert Dempsey, born at Cork, 1742. It seems many documents were found in his hut, but whether destroyed or preserved I cannot say, but hope, one day or other, the possessor will give them to the public. T. E.

THE VEGETABLE WORLD.

In all places where vegetation has been established the germs are so intermingled with the soil, that whenever the earth is turned up, even from considerable depths, and exposed to the air, plants are soon observed to spring as if they had been recently sown, in consequence of the germination of seeds which had remained latent and inactive during the lapse of perhaps many centuries. Islands formed by coral reefs, which have risen above the level of the sea, become, in a short time, covered with verdure. From the materials of the most sterile rock, and even from the yet recent cinders and lava of the volcano, nature prepares the way for vegetable existence. The slightest crevice or inequality is sufficient to arrest the invisible germs that are always floating in the air, and affords the means of sustenance to diminutive races of lichens and mosses. These soon overspread the surface, and are followed, in the course of a few years, by successive tribes of plants of gradually increasing size and strength; till at length the island, or other favoured spot, is converted into a natural and luxuriant garden, of which the productions, rising from the grasses to shrubs and trees, present all the varieties of the fertile meadow, the tangled thicket, and the widely spreading forest. Even in the desert plains of the torrid zone, the eye of the traveller is often refreshed by the appearance of a few hardy plants, which find sufficient materials for their growth in these arid regions; and in the realms of perpetual snow which surround the poles, the navigator is occasionally startled at the prospect of fields of a scarlet hue, the result of a wide expanse of microscopic vegetation.—*Roget's Bridgewater Treatise.*

CURIOUS FISH POND.

At Port Nessock, in Wigtonshire, a large salt water pond has been formed for cod. It is a basin of thirty feet in depth and 160 feet in circumference, hewn out from the solid rock, and communicating with the sea by one of those fissures which are common to bold and precipitous coasts. Attached to it is a neat Gothic cottage for the accommodation of the fishermen, and the rock is surmounted all round by a substantial stone wall three hundred feet in circumference. From the inner or back door of the lodge a winding stairway conducts to the usual halting place—a large flat stone, projecting into the water, and commanding a view of every part of the aquatic prison. When the tide is out the stone is left completely dry, and here a stranger perceives with surprise a hundred mouths simultaneously opened to greet his arrival. The moment the fisherman crosses his threshold the pond is agitated by the action of some hundred fins, and otherwise thrown into a state of anarchy and confusion. Darting from this, that, and the other corner, the whole population move as it were to a common centre, elevate their snouts, lash their tails, and jostle one another with such violence that on a first view they actually seem to be menacing an attack on the poor fisherman in place of the creel-full of limpets he carries. Many of the fish are so tame, that they will feed greedily from the hand; while others again are so shy that the fisherman frequently discourses of their different tempers as a thing quite as palpable as the fins they move by. One gigantic cod, which answers to the name of "Tom," is considered as the patriarch of the pond, and forcibly arrests attention. This unfortunate (who passed his youth in the open sea) was the first prisoner in Port Nessock Pond; and within the last six months of his sojourn he has gradually increased in bulk and weight. He is now wholly blind, from age or disease, and has no chance whatever in the general scramble. The fisherman, however, is very kind to him, and it is affecting as well as curious to see the huge animal raise himself in the water, and then, resting his head on the flat stone, allow itself to be gently patted or stroked, gaping all the while to implore that food which he has no other means of obtaining. Cod is the prevailing species in this pond; there are also haddock, flounders, and various other kinds.

COMMON HONEY BEE.

At a late meeting of the Verulam Philosophical Society, Kenton Moore, Esq., vice-president, in the chair, the secretary (C. Dewhurst, Esq.) read some interesting observations on the natural history and management of the *apis mellifica*, or common honey bee, wherein he detailed a plan of securing the honey without depriving the bees of life, and which is now generally adopted in the county of Suffolk, and originated with his father, the Rev. C. Dewhurst, at Bury St. Edmund's. It is as follows: The hive which is employed by this gentleman is similar to the common one, but with an opening in the roof, of about four inches diameter, with a moveable top, and which is pegged down during the period the bees are filling the hive. As soon as the hive is full, Mr. Dewhurst then carefully removes the top, (while the bees are absent) and then places a wooden box of about eight inches square in its place, and into which the bees work; when this box is full of honey, it is removed, and another substituted, and by repeating this process, great quantities of honey may be yearly obtained, without the least loss or injury to the community.

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